

Richard Brinsley Peake
PRESUMPTION
The Fate of Frankenstein
(1823)

Richard Brinsley Peake's most famous play, *Presumption; or, the Fate of Frankenstein*, opened at the English Opera House on 28 July 1823. Another version exists, under the title of *Frankenstein, A Melodramatic Opera in 3 Acts*, and a third version was published in "Dick's Standard Plays" (c. 1865). The text reproduced here includes all variant texts. In the text reproduced below, material within square brackets appears in the earlier version but not the later, and several minor alterations in the language have been made for the sake of clarity (e.g., Fritz frequently cries "Lauk!"; I have altered this to "Lord!").

DRAMATIS PERSONAE
English Opera House

28 July 1823

- Frankenstein: Mr. Wallack
- Clerval (his friend, in love with Elizabeth): Mr. Bland
- William (brother of Frankenstein): Master Boden
- Fritz (servant of Frankenstein): Mr. Keeley
- De Lacey (a banished gentleman-blind): Mr. Rowbotham
- Felix De Lacey (his son): Mr. Pearman
- Tanskin (a gipsy): Mr. Shield
- Hammerpan (a tinker): Mr. Salter
- First Gipsy
- A Guide (an old man): Mr. R. Phillips
- *****: Mr. T. P. Cooke
- Elizabeth (sister of Frankenstein): Mrs. Austin
- Agatha (daughter of De Lacey): Miss L. Dance
- Safie (an Arabian girl, betrothed to Felix): Miss Povey
- Madame Ninon (wife to Fritz): Mrs. T. Weippert
- Gipsies, Peasants, Choristers, and Dancers (Male and Female)

Scene-Geneva and its vicinity

ACT I

SCENE I

A Gothic Chamber in the house of Frankenstein.

Fritz discovered in a Gothic arm-chair, nodding asleep. During the Symphony of the Song, he starts, rubs his eyes, and comes forward.

AIR — FRITZ

Oh, dear me! what's the matter?
How I shake at each clatter.

My Marrow They harrow.
Oh, dear me! what's the matter? If Mouse
squeaks, or cat sneezes, Cricket chirps, or cock
wheezes,
Then I fret In cold sweat.
Every noise my nerves teases; Bless my heart –
heaven preserve us! I declare I'm so nervous.
Ev'ry Knock is a shock. I declare I'm so nervous!

FRITZ. Oh, Fritz, Fritz, Fritz! What is it come to! you are frighten'd out of your wits. Why did you ever leave your native village! why couldn't you be happy in your native Village with an innocent cow for your companion (bless its sweet breath!) instead of coming here to the City of Geneva to be hired as a servant! (*Starts.*) What's that? – nothing. And then how complimentary! Master only hired me because he thought I looked so stupid! Stupid! ha, ha, ha! but am I stupid though? To be sure Mr. Frankenstein is a kind man, and I should respect him, but that I thinks as how he holds converse with somebody below with a long tail, horns and hoofs, who shall be nameless. (*Starts again.*) What's that! Oh, a gnat on my nose! Ah, anything frightens me now – I'm so nervous! I spill all my bread and milk when I feed myself at breakfast! Lord! Lord! In the country, if a dog bray'd, or a donkey bark'd ever so loud, it had no effect upon me. (*Two distinct loud knocks – Fritz jumps.*) Oh, mercy! I jump like a maggot out of cheese! How my heart beats!

CLER. (*Without.*) Fritz, Fritz!

[**FRITZ.** It's a human being however –]

CLER. (*Without.*) Open the door, Fritz!

FRITZ. Yes. It's only Mr. Clerval, master's friend, who is going to marry Miss Elizabeth, master's sister. (*Opens the door.*)

Enter Clerval.

How d'ye do, sir!

CLER. Good morrow, Fritz! Is Mr. Frankenstein to be seen?

FRITZ. I fear not, Sir, he has as usual been fumi – fumi – fumigating all night at his chemistry. I have not dared to disturb him.

CLER. Mr. Frankenstein pursues his studies with too much ardour.

FRITZ. And what can be the use of it, Mr. Clerval? Work, work, work – always at it. Now, putting a case to you. Now, when I was in the country, with my late cow (she's no more now, poor thing!) if I had sat to and milked her for a fortnight together, day and night, without stopping, do you think I should be any the better for it? I ask you as a gentleman and a scholar.

CLER. Ha, ha, ha! Certainly not!

FRITZ. Nor my cow neither, poor creter. (*Wipes his eyes.*) Excuse my crying – she's defunct, and I always whimper a little when I think on her; and my wife lives away from me, but I don't care so much for that. Oh! Mr. Clerval, between ourselves – hush! didn't you hear a noise! – between ourselves, I want to unbosom my confidence.

CLER. Well?

FRITZ. Between ourselves – there's nobody at the door, is there? – (*Crosses to door.*) – No! well, between ourselves, Mr. Clerval, I have been so very nervous since I came to this place –

CLER. Pshaw!

FRITZ. "Nay," don't 'Pshaw!' till you've heard me out. – My poor Master – I know you are his friend, but he has dealings with the Gentleman in black!

[**CLER.** Yes, I know – the Notary who comes to consult him on my marriage contract –

FRITZ. Notary – no – somebody deeper than that – Oh, Mr. Clerval! I'll tell you. One night Mr. Frankenstein did indulge himself by going to bed. He was worn with fatigue and study. I had occasion to go into his chamber. He was asleep, but frightfully troubled; he groaned and ground his teeth, setting mine on edge. 'It is accomplished!' said he. *Accomplished!* I knew that had nothing to do with

me, but I listened. He started up in his sleep, though his eyes were opened and dead as oysters, he cried, ‘It is animated – it rises – walks!’ Now, my shrewd guess, sir, is that, like Doctor Faustus, my master is raising the Devil.

CLER. Fritz, you are simple; drive such impressions from your mind, you must not misconstrue your Master’s words in a dream. Do you never dream?

FRITZ. (*Mournfully.*) I dream about my Cow sometimes.

CLER. Your master is a studious Chemist – nay, as I sometimes suspect, an alchemist.

FRITZ. Eh! Ah, I think he is. What is an alchemist Mr. Clerval?

CLER. Does he not sometimes speak of the art of making gold?

FRITZ. Lord, sir! do you take Mr. Frankenstein for a coiner?

CLER. Did you never hear him make mention of the grand elixir, which can prolong life to immortality.

FRITZ. Never in all my life!

CLER. Well go – find out if it is possible I can see him. I will not detain him.

FRITZ. Yes, sir. Oh, that laboratory! I’ve got two loose teeth, and I am afraid I shall loose them, for whenever I go towards that infernal place my head shakes like a dice-box. (*Goes to door.*) Oh, mercy! what’s that? Two shining eyes – how they glisten! Dear, dear, why I declare it’s only the cat on the stairs. Puss, puss, pussy! How you frighten’d me, you young *dog*, when you know I am so very nervous!

CLER. Frankenstein, friend of my youth, how extraordinary and secret are thy pursuits! how art thou altered by study! Strange, what a hold has philosophy taken of thy mind – but thou wert always enthusiastic and of boundless ambition. But “Elizabeth – the fair Elizabeth, his sister – what a difference in disposition! Everyone adores her. Happy Clerval, to be now the possessor of Elizabeth, who, unconscious of her beauty, stole thy heart away!

SONG – CLERVAL

Ere witching love my heart possest,
And bade my sighs the nymph pursue,
Calm as the infant’s smiling rest,
No anxious hope nor fear it knew.

But doom’d – ah! doom’d at last to mourn,
What tumults in that heart arose!
An ocean trembling, wild, and torn
By tempests from its deep repose.

Yet let me not the virgin blame,
As tho’ she wish’d my heart despair,
How could the maid suspect a flame,
Who never knew that she was fair.

– But Frankenstein approaches.

Enter Frankenstein, thoughtfully, shown in by Fritz, who exits.

CLER. My dear friend!

FRANK. Clerval!

CLER. Frankenstein, how ill you appear – So [thin and] pale! You look as if your night-watchings had been long and uninterrupted.

FRANK. [You have guessed rightly! –] I have lately been so deeply engaged in one occupation that I have not allowed myself sufficient rest. But how left you my sister, Elizabeth?

CLER. Well, and very happy, only a little uneasy that she sees you so seldom.

FRANK. Aye, I am engaged heart and soul in the pursuit of a discovery – a grand, unheard of wonder! None but those who have experienced can conceive the enticement of Science; he who looks into the book of nature, finds an inexhaustible source of novelty, of wonder, and delight. What hidden treasures are contained in her mighty volume – what strange, undreamed-of mysteries!

CLER. But some little respite – your health should be considered.

FRANK. (*Abstracted.*) After so much time spent in painful labour, to arrive at once at the summit of my desires, would be indeed a glorious consummation of my toils.

CLER. How wild and mysterious his abstractions – he heeds me not! (*Aside.*)

FRANK. (*Apart.*) This discovery will be so vast, so overwhelming, that all the steps by which I have been progressively led will be obliterated, and I shall behold only the astonishing result.

CLER. Frankenstein!

FRANK. Ha! (*To Clerval.*) I see by your eagerness that you expect to be informed of the secret with which I am acquainted. That cannot be.

CLER. I do not wish to pry into your secrets, Frankenstein. I am no natural philosopher; my imagination is too vivid for the details of science. If I contemplate, let it be the charms of your fair sister, Elizabeth. My message hither now – I wish to fix the day for our nuptials. But we must be certain on so important and happy an event, that we shall enjoy the society of our Frankenstein.

FRANK. Pardon me, Clerval! My first thoughts should recur to those dear friends whom I most love, and who are so deserving of my love – name the day?

CLER. On the morn after to-morrow, may I lead the charming Elizabeth to the altar?

FRANK. E'en as you will – e'en as you will! (*Aside.*) My wonderful task will be ere that completed. It will be animated! It will live – will think! (*Crosses in deep reflection – afterwards turns up the stage.*)

CLER. (*Apart.*) Again in reverie! this becomes alarming – surely his head is affected. I am bound in duty to counteract this madness, and discover the secret of his deep reflections.

Frankenstein sits down – musing.

Farewell, Frankenstein! He heeds me not – 'tis in vain to claim his notice – but I will seek the cause, and, if possible, effect his cure. No time must be lost. Fritz must assist me, and this way he went.

(Exit Clerval)

FRANK. Every moment lost, fevers me. What time have I devoted? (*Rises.*) Had I not been heated by an almost supernatural enthusiasm, my application to this study would have been irksome, disgusting, and almost intolerable. To examine the causes of life – I have had recourse to death – I have seen how the fine form of man has been wasted and degraded – have beheld the corruption of death succeed to the blooming cheek of life! I have seen how the worm inherits the wonders of the eye and brain – I paused – analysing all the minutiae of causation as exemplified in the change of life from death-until from the midst of this darkness the sudden light broke in upon me! A light so brilliant and dazzling, some miracle must have produced the flash! The vital principle! The cause of life! – Like Prometheus of old, have I daringly attempted the formation – the animation of a Being! To my task – away with reflection – to my task – to my task!

(Exit) Enter Clerval and Fritz..

FRITZ. Now he's going to blow up his fire again!

CLER. And thus you say for whole days and nights together, without repose, and almost without food he has immured himself in his study.

FRITZ. Yes – there he is – amongst otamies and phials and crucibles, and retorts, and charcoal, and fire, and the Devil – for I'm sure he's at the bottom of it, and that makes me so nervous.

CLER. Fritz, you love your master, and are, I know, a discreet servant – but his friends and relations are all unhappy on his account. His health is rapidly sinking under the fatigue of his present labours – will you not assist to call him back to life and to his family?

FRITZ. La! I'd call out all day long, if that would do any good.

CLER. I know his mind has been devoted to obtruse and occult sciences – that his brain has been bewildered with the wild fancies of Cornelius Agrippa, Paracelsus, and Albertus Magnus –

FRITZ. Oh! Mr. Clerval! how can you mention such crazy tooth-breaking names? There sounds something wicked in them.

CLER. Wicked? Psha, man! they are the renowned names of the earliest experimental philosophers. The sages who promised to the hopes of the laborious alchymist the transmutation of metals and the elixer of life.

FRITZ. O! Ah! indeed! Lack a daisy me!

CLER. Do you understand me!

FRITZ. Not particularly –

CLER. Fritz – tho' simple, you are an excellent fellow – have you any idea what is the strange object of which your master is in search?

FRITZ. I have my suspicions truly.

CLER. What are they?

FRITZ. (*Looks round.*) Hush – no – nothing but the wind – To tell you the truth, I suspect that the grand object is –

CLER. What?

FRITZ. A secret – there now the murder's out.

CLER. (*Aside.*) This fellow is more knave than fool – he wants a bribe. Now, sirrah! answer me with candour. What is it you like best in the world?

FRITZ. Milk!

CLER. Simpleton! I mean what station of Life would you covet?

FRITZ. Station?

CLER. Yes. Would you like to be master of a cottage?

FRITZ. What, and keep a cow? – the very thing. Why, Mr. Clerval, you're a conjuror, and know my thoughts by art.

CLER. Fritz, I want to discover – but you must be prudent – (*Takes out purse and gives a florin to Fritz.*) Here's an earnest of my future intentions touching the cow and cottage.

FRITZ. Bodikins! a florin! (*Examining money.*)

CLER. Friend Fritz, you must some time, when Mr. Frankenstein is absent from home, admit me into his study.

FRITZ. Oh, dear, I can't! – don't take your florin back again [sir] (*Puts up money.*) – for he always locks the door. To be sure, there's a little window – on the gallery – I can see when he puffs up his fire.

CLER. Well, they say the end justifies the means; and in this case I admit the maxim. You can peep through that window, and inform me minutely of what you see.

FRITZ. But what is to become of my nerves?

CLER. Remember your cottage –

FRITZ. And the Cow!

CLER. Put me in possession of the secret, and both shall be secured to you. Some one approaches.

FRITZ. Mr. Clerval, I'm your man. I'm nervous, and the devil sticks in my gizzard; but the cow will drive it out again. (*Starts.*) What's that? Oh, nothing – oh, dear, I'm so nervous.

(Exeunt Fritz and Clerval)

SCENE II

Part of the Villa Residence of Elizabeth at Belrive. – Garden Terrace – Sunset – William discovered sleeping on a garden bench – Enter Elizabeth from the house.

SONG – ELIZABETH

The summer sun shining on tree and on tower,
And gilding the landscape with radiance divine,
May give joy to the heart o'er which pleasure has power,
But eve's pensive beauties are dearer to mine.

Through trees gently sighing, the cool breeze of even
Seems sympathy's voice to the ear of despair;
And the dew-drops (like tears shed by angels of heaven),
Revive the frail hopes in the bosom of care.

During this scene the stage becomes progressively dark.

MAD. NINON. (*Within.*) William! little William!

ELIZ. Where can our little favorite have secreted himself?

Enter Madame Ninon, from the house.

NIN. Heaven bless Mont Blanc and all the neighbouring hills! Why, where is the boy? How angry shall I be with him for staying out so late.

ELIZ. Why, Ninon, assuage your friendly wrath – yonder is William.

NIN. (*Goes to child.*) Fast asleep, I declare, the pretty boy – how like his poor mother, who is gone. La, La, I daresay my Fritz was just such another, only his hair was red. Pretty William – he was the pin basket. Bless the thirteen cantons, I nursed him. William – (*Kisses him.*) – a pair of gloves, Sir! (*William waking.*) Fie, you idle urchin, sleeping so early this beautiful evening.

William rises. All come forward.

WILL. Indeed, dear Ninon, I know not how I fell asleep; but I rose with the sun, and thinking I would lie down with it, I closed my eyes, and –

NIN. Slumbered like a young dormouse?

ELIZ. But, William, you have not neglected your books?

WILL. Oh, no; for then I should not be such a scholar as my elder brother, Victor Frankenstein.

(Runs to end of terrace.)

ELIZ. Alas, poor Frankenstein! he studies indeed too deeply; but love -- blighted love, drove him to solitude and abstruse research.

NIN. Ah, Madame, may love make you happy! Mr. Clerval was here this morning, and looked as handsome –

ELIZ. Peace, Ninon! And yet, why should I check your Cheerfulness? Ninon, I have given orders to my milliner to make you a handsome new cap. When your husband, Fritz, comes from Geneva, he may call and bring it.

NIN. Thank you, dear madam; but see –

Re-Enter William from terrace, and runs, crossing behind.)

WILL. Oh, sister – oh, Madame Ninon! two travellers are coming up the hill – such a beautiful lady – but her guide, I think, has fallen from his horse. See – here's the lady, helping the poor man.

Melo-Music. Enter Safie, supporting the Guide, from terrace.

ELIZ. Madame, allow me to offer my assistance.

SAFIE. Thanks – thanks, fair Lady; it is not for myself I require rest or help, for I am young. But this aged man, my faithful follower, is completely worn with fatigue.

ELIZ. Ninon, see him conveyed into the house. Give him your support, and assist to welcome our guests.

NIN. (*Crossing to guide.*) Lean on me, old sir – aye, as heavy as you like; bless you my arm is strong, tho' I am little. Come, gently – gently – there – there –

Ninon leads the guide into house, William following them. By this time the wing lights are turned off.

SAFIE. I can only weep my thanks, of late I have been unused to kindness.

ELIZ. Your garb and manner denote you a stranger here – yet you are acquainted with our language, and you appear to have travelled a great distance.

SAFIE. From Leghorn, – a wearisome journey. How far am I distant from the Valley of the Lake?

ELIZ. But a few leagues.

SAFIE. Then tonight I probably could reach it? (*Animated.*)

ELIZ. I would not advise the attempt till the morning – the sun is down now; you are distant from any inn; your horses are fatigued; permit me to offer in my house refreshment and repose.

SAFIE. No, no; no repose until my purpose is accomplished. Yet my poor follower needs rest; generous stranger, I gratefully accept your hospitality.

ELIZ. And be assured such comfort as Eliza Frankenstein can offer shall be freely yours.

SAFIE. You – you mention the name of Frankenstein!

ELIZ. I bear that appellation.

SAFIE. How fortunate! happy chance that brought me to your hospitable door. Know you the family of De Lacey?

ELIZ. I knew it well, but years have elapsed since I have heard of them.

SAFIE. I seek their retreat. Exiled from France, they now exist in the Valley of the Lake.

ELIZ. So near, and I not acquainted with their residence! Does the gentle Agatha De Lacey yet live?

SAFIE. Tomorrow's morn I trust will find me locked in her embrace.

ELIZ. What rapturous news for my dear brother, Frankenstein – night approaches – let us in and converse further on this subject, which is of deep interest to me – hark! – the sweet nightingale is pouring forth its evening melody.

DUETT – ELIZABETH AND SAFIE

Hark how it floats upon the dewy air!
Oh! what a dying, dying close was there!
'Tis harmony from yon sequester'd bower,
Sweet harmony that soothes the midnight hour!

(*Exeunt into house*)

SCENE III

The sleeping Apartment of Frankenstein. Dark. The Bed is within a recess between the wings, enclosed by dark green curtains. A Sword (to break) hanging. A Large French Window; between the wings a staircase leading to a Gallery across the stage, on which is the Door of the Laboratory above. A small high Lattice in centre of scene, next the Laboratory Door. A Gothic Table on stage, screwed. A Gothic Chair in centre, and Footstool. Music expressive of the rising of a storm. Enter Frankenstein, with a Lighted Lamp, which he places on the table. Distant thunder heard.

FRANK. This evening – this lowering evening, will, in all probability, complete my task. Years have I laboured, and at length discovered that to which so many men of genius have in vain directed their inquiries. After days and nights of incredible labour and fatigue, I have become master of the secret of bestowing animation upon lifeless matter. With so astonishing a power in my hands, long, long did I hesitate how to employ it. The object of my experiments lies there (*Pointing up to the laboratory.*) – A huge automaton in human form. Should I succeed in animating it, Life and Death would appear to me as ideal bounds, which I shall break through and pour a torrent of light into our dark world. I have lost all soul or sensation but for this one pursuit. (*Storm.*) A storm has hastily arisen! – 'Tis a dreary night – the rain patters dismally against the panes – 'tis a night for such a task – I'll in and attempt to infuse the spark of life. –

Music. – Frankenstein takes up lamp, cautiously looks around him, ascends the stairs, crosses the gallery above, and exits into door of laboratory. Enter Fritz, trembling, with a candle.

FRITZ. Master isn't here – dare I peep. Only think of the reward Mr. Clerval promised me, a cow and a cottage, milk and a mansion. Master is certainly not come up yet. My candle burns all manner of colours, and spits like a roasted apple. (*Runs against the chair and drops his light, which goes out.*) There, now, I'm in the dark. Oh my nerves.

A blue flame appears at the small lattice window above, as from the laboratory.

What's that? O lord; there he is, kicking up the devil's own flame! Oh my Cow! I'll venture up – oh my cottage! I'll climb to the window – it will be only one peep to make my fortune.

Music. – Fritz takes up footstool, he ascends the stairs, when on the gallery landing place, he stands on the footstool tiptoe to look through the small high lattice window of the laboratory, a sudden combustion is heard within. The blue flame changes to one of a reddish hue.

FRANK. (Within.) It lives! it lives!

FRITZ. (Speaks through music.) Oh, dear! oh, dear! oh, dear!

Fritz, greatly alarmed, jumps down hastily, totters tremblingly down the stairs in vast hurry; when in front of stage, having fallen flat in fright, with difficulty speaks.

FRITZ. There's a hob – hob-goblin, 20 feet high! wrapp'd in a mantle – mercy – mercy –

[Falls down.] *Music. – Frankenstein rushes from the laboratory, without lamp, fastens the door in apparent dread, and hastens down the stairs, watching the entrance of the laboratory.*

FRANK. It lives! [It lives.] I saw the dull yellow eye of the creature open, it breathed hard, and a convulsive motion agitated its limbs. What a wretch have I formed, [his legs are in proportion and] I had selected his features as beautiful – beautiful! Ah, horror! his cadaverous skin scarcely covers the work of muscles and arteries beneath, his hair lustrous, black, and flowing – his teeth of pearly whiteness – but these luxuriances only form more horrible contrasts with the deformities of the Demon.

Music. – He listens at the foot of the staircase.

[It is yet quiet –] What have I accomplished? the beauty of my dream has vanished! and breathless horror and disgust fill my heart. For this I have deprived myself of rest and health, have worked my brain to madness; and when I looked to reap my great reward, a flash breaks in upon my darkened soul, and tells me my attempt was impious, and that its fruition will be fatal to my peace forever. (*He listens again.*) All is still! The dreadful spectre of a human form – no mortal could withstand the horror of that countenance – a

mummy endued with animation could be so hideous as the wretch have endued with life! – miserable and impious being that I am! – lost – lost] Elizabeth brother! Agatha! – faithful Agatha! nevermore dare I look upon your virtuous faces. Lost! lost! lost! [

Music – Frankenstein sinks on a chair.

FRITZ. (Looks up once or twice before he speaks.) Oh my nerves; I feel as if I had just come out of strong fits, and nobody to throw water in my face – Master sleeps, so I'll, if my legs won't lap up under me – just – make my escape.

Sudden combustion heard, and smoke issues, the door of the laboratory breaks to pieces with a loud crash – red fire within.

FRITZ. Oh – Oh. (Runs out hastily)

Music. The Demon discovered at door entrance in smoke, which evaporates – the red flame continues visible. The Demon advances forward, breaks through the balustrade or railing of gallery immediately facing the door of laboratory, jumps on the table beneath, and from thence leaps on the stage, stands in attitude before Frankenstein, who had started up in terror; they gaze for a moment at each other.

FRANK. The demon corpse to which I have given life!

Music. – The Demon looks at Frankenstein most intently, approaches him with gestures of conciliation. Frankenstein retreats, the Demon pursuing him.

Its unearthly ugliness renders it too horrible for human eyes! [*The Demon approaches him.*]

Fiend! do not dare approach me – avaunt, or dread the fierce vengeance of my arm wrecked on your miserable head –

Music. – Frankenstein takes the sword from the nail, points with it at the Demon, who snatches the sword, snaps it in two and throws it on stage. The Demon then seizes Frankenstein – loud thunder heard – throws him violently on the floor, ascends the staircase, opens the large window, and disappears through the casement. Frankenstein remains motionless on the ground. – Thunder and lightning until the drop falls.

ACT II

SCENE I

An apartment in the House of Elizabeth, at Belrive. – Table and chairs. The hurried music from the close of the First Act to play in continuance until this scene is discovered, and Frankenstein enters, hastily, to centre of stage. Music ceases.

FRANK. At length in my sister's house! – and safe! I have paced with quick steps, but at every turn feared to meet the wretch – my heart palpitates with the sickness of fear! [He does not pursue me – dreams that have been my food and pleasant rest for so long a space, are now become a hell to me – the change so rapid, the overthrow so complete –] What have I cast on the world? a creature powerful in form, of supernatural and gigantic strength, but with the mind of an infant. Oh, that I could recall my impious labour, or suddenly extinguish the spark which I have so presumptuously bestowed. – Yet that were murder – murder in its worse and most horrid form – for he is mine – my own formation. Ha! who approaches?

Enter Elizabeth, they embrace.

ELIZ. My dear Victor! my dear brother!

FRANK. Elizabeth! [My love, how sweet is this embrace –]

ELIZ. You [are] come to stay, I hope, until our wedding is over. Clerval will be here presently. Alas! Frankenstein! your cheek is pallid – your eye has lost its wonted lustre. Oh, Victor, what are the secrets that prey upon your mind and form? – The pernicious air of your laboratory will be fatal to you.

FRANK. (*Apart.*) Fatal indeed!

ELIZ. I pray you, for my sake, cease – I understand upon one subject you have laboured incessantly.

FRANK. One subject! (*Aside.*) Am I discovered?

ELIZ. You change colour, my dear brother. I will not mention it – I – there is a wildness in your eyes for which I cannot account.

FRANK. (*Starts.*) See – see – he is there!

ELIZ. Dearest Frankenstein – what is the cause of this?

FRANK. Do not ask me. I – I thought I saw the dreaded spectre glide into the room.

ELIZ. Calm your mind, Victor.

FRANK. Pardon me, Elizabeth. I know not what you will think of me.

ELIZ. I have intelligence of one dear to you and for whom, prior to your close attention to study, you had the tenderest regard. – Say, Victor, will you not be glad to hear that I have a clue to lead you to your lost love, Agatha De Lacey!

FRANK. Agatha! dearest Agatha! her name recalls my sinking spirits – where – where is she to be found? Oh, would that I ne'er had been robbed of her! 'Twas her loss that drove me to deep and fatal experiments!

ELIZ. A traveller! a beautiful Arabian girl, was here but last night; she was seeking Felix De Lacey, the brother of Agatha, to whom she had been betrothed – she gave me the information that the family are but a short distance from hence – the Valley of the Lake.

FRANK. And Agatha there? – Agatha! there is yet life and hope for me – Ah no. (*Aside.*) The dreadful monster I have formed! – away with thought! Elizabeth, I will instantly seek her. Agatha's smiles shall move this heavy pressure – to the Valley of the Lake. –Farewell, sister, farewell!

(Embraces Elizabeth, and Exit hastily)

[**ELIZ.** Unfortunate Frankenstein! – what can thus agitate him? – he will not hint the mysterious calamity to his affectionate sister –but he flies now to seek her who possessed his first love, and Agatha will soothe his mind to its former peaceful state – Ah love! All potent love! – If care or misfortune prey on my heart, I have only to think of Clerval, and be happy. –

SONG – ELIZABETH

When evening breezes mildly blow,
And all day's tumults cease;
Where streams in gentle murmurs flow;
And all around breathes peace –
What shall my pensive mind employ,
From ev'rything free?
I'll turn to life's best dearest joy,
And think of love and Thee!

When pleasure's smile no longer gleams,
And sorrow weighs my breast
When hope withdraws its placid beams
I sink with care opprest –
Ah whither shall my heart then turn,
To what sweet refuge flee?
With passion's fire then shall burn
And throb with love and thee. (*Exit*)

SCENE II

A wood in the neighbourhood of Geneva. A Bush – A Gypsy's fire flaming, over which hangs a cauldron. A group of Gypsies discovered surrounding the fire in various positions. All laugh as the scene discovers them. When Tanskin, Hammerpan, with others (male and female) advance to sing the following

CHORUS

Urge the slow rising smoke,
Give the faggot a poke,
For unroof'd rovers are we;
Whilst our rags flutt'ring fly,
We the brown skin espy,
Our vellum of pedigree.
Behold each tawney face
Of our hard-faring race,
Which the cold blast ne'er can feel;
See our glossy hair wave,
Hear us, loud, as we crave
But dumb only when we steal!

TANS. I tell you it was even so, friend Hammerpan – a giant creature with something of a human shape; but ugly and terrible to behold as you would paint the Devil.

HAM. And does this monster any mischief, or is he a pacific monster?

TANS. I never heard of any being harmed by him!

HAM. Then why are you so frightened, Master Tanskin? For my part, should he come across my path, let who will fly, I'll stand my ground like an anvil!

TANS. And get well beat like one for your pains.

(Flute heard.)

What sounds are those?

HAM. (*Returning to the fire.*) Why, 'tis Felix, the son of old De Lacey. The young fellow is much famed for his excellence upon the flute, as the father for his piety, charities, and twanging on the harp, which, together with the beauty of his daughter, seems to have turned the heads and won the hearts of all the surrounding country. Now my merry wanderers, our meal is smoking. I'faith, I'm in a rare relishing humour for it, so, prithee, Dame, ladle us our porridge, with a whole dead sheep in it. Fegs, it scents rarely! (*Sniffs.*)

Music. – The gipsies crowd round the fire with their bowls. The Demon rapidly crosses the platform at the back – Disappears.

1ST GYP. Hillihol! – what tall bully's that? the steeple of Ingoldstadt taking a walk. See yonder, comrades!

HAM. See what?

TANS. (*Trembling.*) As I'm a living rogue, 'tis he!

HAM. One of the Devil's grenadier's, mayhap! Pooh, pooh! Old Tanskin, we all know you are a living rogue, but you won't frighten us with your ten feet. Come, give me a drink, I say.

One of the gipsies gives him a wooden bowl.

Gentlemen Gipsies, here's all your good – ha! ha! ha! –

Music. – The Demon appears on an eminence of the bush, or a projecting rock.

Help! murder! wounst! 'tis the Devil himself! away with the porridge!

Music. Throws bowl away. Hammerpan and all the Gipsies shriek and run off. The Demon descends, portrays by action his sensitiveness of light and air, perceives the gipsies's fire, which excites his admiration – thrusts his hand into the flame, withdraws it hastily in pain. Takes out a lighted piece of stick, compares it with another faggot which has not been ignited. Takes the food expressive of surprise and pleasure. A flute is heard, without. The Demon, breathless with delight, eagerly listens. It ceases – he expresses disappointment. Footsteps heard and the Demon retreats behind the rock.

Enter Agatha, followed by Felix, his flute slung at his back.

AGA. Those sweet sounds recall happier days to my memory. – In the midst of [our] poverty, how consoling it is to possess such a brother as you are. Dear, thoughtful Felix, the first little white flower that peeped out from beneath the snowy ground you brought, because you thought it would give pleasure to your poor Agatha.

FELIX. We are the children of misfortune; [Agatha –] poverty's chilling grasp nearly annihilates us. Our poor blind father, now the inmate of yon cottage – he who has been blessed with prosperity to be thus reduced – the noble-minded old De Lacey. Wretched man that I am, to have been the cause of ruin to both father and sister.

AGA. Why, Felix, we suffered in a virtuous cause! Poor Safie, thy beloved –

FELIX. Is, I fear, lost to me for ever. The treacherous Mahometan, her father, whose escape I aided from a dungeon in Paris (where he was confined as a State prisoner), that false father has doubtless arrived at Constantinople, and is triumphing at the fate of his wretched dupes.

AGA. Nay, Felix –

FELIX. Alas, Agatha! for aiding that escape, my family – my beloved family – are suffering exile and total confiscation of fortune.

AGA. But Safie still loves you?

FELIX. That thought is the more maddening! Safie! fairest Safie! – and she was my promised reward for liberating her faithless father – dragged away with him and forced to comply with his obdurate wishes. Oh, she is lost – lost to me for ever!

AGA. Let not hope forsake you, Felix –

FELIX. [Agatha! It requires resignation to bear our heavy woes.] The early passion of each of us has been blighted, our rigorous imprisonment and sudden banishment have driven all trace of thee from thy admirer, young Frankenstein.

AGA. Dear Felix, press not more wretched recollections on my mind. I consider Frankenstein lost to me for ever. In abject poverty, dare I hope that the brilliant and animated student could e'er think of the unfortunate Agatha. (*Weeps.*) Let me dry these unworthy tears and exert a woman's firmest fortitude. My soul is henceforth devoted exclusively to the service of my poor dark father.

FELIX, you shall behold me no longer unhappy.

DUET – FELIX AND AGATHA

Of all the knots which Nature ties,
The secret, sacred sympathies,
That, as with viewless chains of gold,
The heart a happy prisoner hold,
None is more chaste – more bright – more pure,
Stronger, stern trials to endure;
None is more pure of earthly leaven,
More like the love of highest heaven,
Than that which binds, in bonds how blest
A daughter to a father's breast.

(Exeunt)

Music. – The Demon cautiously ventures out – his mantle having been caught by the bush, he disrobes himself leaving the mantle attached to the rock; he watches Felix and Agatha with wonder and rapture, appears irresolute whether he dares to follow them; he hears the flute of Felix, stands amazed and pleased, looks around him, snatches at the empty air; and with clenched hands puts them to each ear – appears vexed at his disappointment in not possessing the sound; rushes forward afterwards, again listens, and, delighted with the sound, steals off catching at it with his hands.

SCENE III

Exterior of the Cottage of Old De Lacey. On right, a hovel, with a low door, near which are two or three large logs of wood and a hatchet; a small basket with violets on a stool at the right side of the cottage door, and a stool also on the left side of the cottage, whereon De Lacey is discovered seated, leaning on his cane, a common harp at his side. – Music.

DEL. Another day is added to the life of banished De Lacey! (*Rises and comes forward.*) But how will it be passed – like the preceding days – in wretched poverty, hopeless grief, and miserable darkness! (*Calls.*) Agatha! Felix! Alas! I am alone! Hark – no – I thought I heard footsteps – my children come. They must not suppose me cheerless – my lute is here – ‘tis a fair deceit on them – this lute which has so oft been damped with the tears from my sightless eyes – the sound of it is the only indication I can give that I am contented with my lot!

Music. – De Lacey returns to his seat and plays several chords. The Demon enters, attracted by the lute, suddenly perceives De Lacey, and approaches towards him – expresses surprise by action that De Lacey does not avoid him – discovers his loss of sight, which the Demon appears to understand by placing his hand over his own eyes, and feeling his way. At the conclusion of the music on the lute – occasioned, as it were, by the Demon having placed his hand on the instrument – a short pause, and during which the Demon, having lost the sound, appears to be looking for it, when the lute music is again resumed. In the midst of the music (without ceasing) a voice is heard.

FELIX. (*Within.*) This way, Agatha.

The Demon, alarmed, observes the little door of hovel, which he pushes open, signifies that he wishes for shelter, and retreats into this hovel or wood-house by the ending of the lute music by De Lacey, when Enter Felix and Agatha.

FELIX. (*Apart to Agatha.*) Observe his countenance, beaming with benevolence and love – behold those silver hairs – and, Agatha, I – I have reduced him to this pitiable state of poverty!

AGA. Cease, Felix – this self reproach? (*Goes to De Lacey.*) We have returned, dear father. Have you wanted us?

Agatha leads her father forward.

DEL. No, no, Agatha! You anticipate all my wants, and perform every little office of affection with gentleness.

AGA. Is it not my duty, and am I not rewarded by your kind smiles?

DEL. Amiable girl, let thy poor father kiss thee. (*They embrace.*) Felix, my son, where are you? (*Felix comes forward, and takes his hand.*) Now I am cheerful – I am happy! – indeed I am, my children. Let me encourage you to cast off your gloom. What – a tear, Agatha!

AGA. Nay, dear sir!

DEL. ‘Tis on my hand. (*Pressing her hand to his lips, which he had held in his while speaking to Felix.*)

The Demon appears watching them with attention and interest.

FELIX. (*Apart.*) At first my father’s countenance was illuminated with pleasure – but thoughtfulness and sadness have again succeeded – (*Assuming gaiety.*) Now must I to labour again. Our [stock of] fuel is nearly exhausted. My time has been lately so occupied I have omitted my task in the forest.

Music. – Felix takes up a hatchet and chops a log of wood.

AGA. And I, too, have been neglectful – these flowers of which you are so fond, my dear father, have wither’d – they must be replaced

[Music – she takes them from the basket – Felix is busied cutting the wood –]

SAFIE. (*At a distance.*) Felix!

AGA. What voice was that?

FELIX. It cannot be – no – it was but fancy!

Music resumed. – Felix chops the log in continuance – at a similar break in the tune the same voice heard again, nearer.

SAFIE. (*Without.*) Felix!

No music.

FELIX. That magic sound! Alas! no – there is no such happiness in store for me!

SAFIE. (*Without, louder.*) Felix! Felix!

Music. – Felix drops the hatchet, rushes forward. – At the same instant Safie enters, and falls into the arms of Felix – pronouncing "Felix."

FELIX. ‘Tis she! – Safie! Beloved of my soul! – Ah! revive!

DEL. Safie, the traitor’s daughter? Impossible!

AGA. ‘Tis, indeed, our sweet Safie!

FELIX. We never will part more! Father! father! would that you could behold her! It is my dear, lost Safie.

Music. – Safie revives, and crosses to old De Lacey, kneels, and kisses his hand, during which the Demon appears at the little hovel, watching them, and then retires within again.

DEL. Bless you, my child! where is your father – where the treacherous friend who devoted us to ignominy?

SAFIE. (*Rises.*) I have fled from him; he would have sacrificed his daughter, loathing the idea that I should be united to one of Christian faith. Sickening at the prospect of again returning to Asia and being immured in a harem – ill suited to the temper of my soul now accustomed to a nobler emulation – I – I have sought the love and protection of my Felix!

FELIX. Faithful girl! Your constancy shall be crowned by eternal love and gratitude.

AGA. But Safie, you are fatigued. Come, dear girl, and on my lowly couch, seek repose.

Music. – Safie affectionately kisses and presses De Lacey’s hand, embraces Felix, crosses back to Agatha, and is led into the cottage by Agatha and Felix.

FELIX. (*Who returns with a gun from the cottage-door.*) Father, I am wild with joy! – no longer the sad, pining Felix. The sun of prosperity again gleams on us – Safie is returned! I am rich! – happy! But hold! I must procure refreshment for our guest. Our larder is not too much encumbered with provision. I’ll to the village – I’ll cross the forest – I’ll hunt, shoot – and all in ecstasy! Farewell, father! I’ll soon be back. Farewell!

[Music. – Exit Felix. – The Demon ventures out, and looks with a kind expression on De Lacey.

DEL. Good Felix! Now, by the return of Safie will his hopes be rewarded – yet must he remain in perpetual poverty and unceasing labour. But this instant, did he complain that our store of fuel was consumed – unless he possessed superhuman strength his day’s employment must be doubled – where are my favorite violets?

Music. – De Lacey feels for the Basket which contained them – the Demon apppears to comprehend his wish, and rushes off.

DEL. My flower basket not yet replenished. – My dear children amply repay my former anxious care – they have toiled for my support throughout our misfortunes –

Music. – The Demon re-enters cautiously and tremblingly with a handful of flowers, which he gently places in the basket.

DEL. Thanks dear Agatha! – ever watchful of your poor father’s comfort –

Music. – De Lacey turns up the stage, and again seats himself on the cottage stool. – The Demon examines log of wood, takes up hatchet, points to the wood, intimating he understands the use of it – Agatha appearing at the window – The Demon rushes off with the hatchet. – Music ceases.

DEL. Agatha!

Enter Agatha from cottage.

AGA. Did you call, father?

DEL. Sleeps your sweet guest?

AGA. Fatigue will soon lull her to repose. I should not have left her had I not thought I heard you call me. Ah, father, some one has punished my negligence by replenishing your basket of violets.

DEL. Did you not fill it, Agatha?

AGA. No, dear sir. – Ah, Felix has forestalled me.

Exit Agatha into cottage again.

DEL. [No person has been here since the departure of Felix.] (*De Lacey rises and takes up the basket of flowers from the stool. Smelling the violets.*) How delightful is the perfume! – more exquisite because I am debarred the pleasure of beholding these sweet emblems of spring! The touch and scent elevate my spirits! How ungrateful am I to complain! In the contemplation of thee, oh, Nature, the past will be blotted from my memory! – the present is tranquil, and the future gilded by bright rays of hope and anticipated joy.

Music. – DeLacey replaces the basket of flowers, and returns to his seat, leaning pensively on his cane. – The Demon enters with a pile of green faggots with foliage on his shoulders and throws them loosely on the stage. – Smiles with gratulation at that which he has accomplished. – Approaches De Lacey, falls flat at his feet, then kneels to him, and is about to press his hand. – De Lacey feels around him with his cane and hand, without the knowledge of anyone being near him, and seated all the time – then calls.

DEL. Agatha! Agatha!

Music. – The Demon instantly retreats into hovel, and Agatha enters from cottage door.

Agatha, child, I pray you lead me in. (*Rises from his seat and comes forward.*)

AGA. Yes, father. Good Heavens! why, Felix could not have returned from the forest so quickly? What a quantity of wood!

DEL. How?

AGA. Here is fuel to last us for a long time. [– Surely some kind spirit [watches over us – or] how could we have been so bountifully supplied? Come, father, to the cottage – come!

Music. – Agatha leads De Lacy into cottage, afterwards comes forward.

– Frankenstein! vain is the endeavour to drive you from my recollection. Each bird that sings, each note of music that I hear, reminds me of the sweet moments of my former love!

SONG – AGATHA

(*Flute accompaniment, behind the scenes.*)

In vain I view the landscapes round,
Or climb the highest hill;
In vain, in vain, I listen to the sound
Of ev'ry murmuring rill.
For vain is all I hear or see,
When Victor dear is far from me. (*Thrice*)
But hark, hark, hark,
My love, my love is near,
His well-known dulcet notes I hear. (*Thrice*)

Oh, yes, my love is near,
I hear him in the grove;
Soon will he be here,
And breathe soft vows of love.
Oh, fly not yet, ye blissful hours,
Oh, fly not yet away;
While love its soft enchanting pours,
Prolong, prolong your stay!
(*Thrice*) Oh, yes, my love is near,
I hear him in the grove,
Soon will he be here,
And breathe soft vows of love!

(*Exit Agatha into cottage*)

SCENE IV

A Wild Forest.

Enter Felix, with his gun.

FELIX. Not a shot yet – and, egad, joy has made my hand so unsteady, that were a fine pheasant to get up, I could not bring it down again. Thy return, sweet Safie, has restored me to existence. When I thought I had lost thee for ever, I was occupied by gloomy

thoughts, and neither heeded the descent of the evening star nor the golden sunrise reflected on the lake; but now my love fills my imagination, and all is enjoyment!

SONG – FELIX

Thy youthful charms, bright maid, inspire
And grace my fav'rite theme,
Whose person kindles soft desire,
Whose mind secures esteem.
Oh, hear me then my flame avow,
And fill my heart with joy –
A flame which taught by time to grow,
No time can e'er destroy.
My tender suit with smiles approve,
And share the sweets of mutual love.

When autumn yields her ripen'd corn,
Or winter, darkening, lowers,
With tenderest care I'll soothe thy morn,
And cheer thy evening hours.
Again, when smiling spring returns,
We'll breathe the vernal air;
And still when summer sultry burns,
To woodland walks repair –
There seek retirement's sheltered grove,
And share the sweets of mutual love.

Felix retires up stage. Enter Frankenstein.

FRANK. In vain do I seek a respite from these dreadful thoughts – where'er I turn my eyes, I expect to behold the supernatural Being! – to see him spring from each woody recess – but on, on to Agatha, and repose.

FELIX. A traveller! and surely I know his air and manner. (*Comes forward.*)

FRANK. Good stranger, can you direct me to the habitation of old De Lacey?

FELIX. Better than most persons, I trust.

FRANK. How! Felix De Lacey!

FELIX. The same! the same! Frankenstein! You know, my friend – 'tis long since we have met.

FRANK. Your strange and sudden disappearance from Paris –

FELIX. Makes as strange a story, with which I shall not now detain you. Come to our humble cottage. [– Ah, Frankenstein, we have been as poor as mice, and our dwelling is not much larger than a trap –] Egad! I'm overjoyed to see you!

FRANK. And Agatha?

FELIX. Is queen of the Castle! – and between ourselves Frankenstein has still a warm corner of her heart for you. Come, we have only to cross the wood. [– I'm in high spirits, my friend – I've this day recover'd my mistress – but that will make another strange story. – This is indeed a lucky day – Safie is restored – and I ramble out to kill a Pheasant, and pop upon a philosopher who is likely to become a brother-in-law –]

HAM. (*Without.*) Any good Christians in the neighbourhood?

FELIX. What have we here?

Enter Hammerpan, with a long pole, tinker's utensils, fire kettle, &c.

HAM. Real Christians! human beings! Oh, good Gentlemen, have you seen it?

FELIX. It! – what?

HAM. Ah! that's it! As I live, I saw it an hour ago in the forest!

FELIX. What do you mean by *it*?

HAM. My hair stood on end like mustard and cress, and so will yours when you see it!

FELIX. Get you gone! you are tipsy!

HAM. I wish I was. As I take it, you are Master Felix, of the Valley of the Lake; we've done business together before now.

FELIX. I know you not!

HAM. I mended your kettle t'other day. You did me a good turn – one good turn deserves another – I'll put you on your guard – the very devil is abroad.

FRANK. (*Aside.*) How!

FELIX. (*Laughs.*) Ha! ha! ha! You romancing tinker! [– and pray how was his worship dressed?

HAM. [Dress'd – why it was stark undressed all but a cloak.] You may laugh, but the other gentleman don't laugh. You may perceive he believes it . (*To Frankenstein.*) I saw it – I saw with *this one eye*.

FELIX. One eye!

HAM. Yes, I'm blind of the other – a little boy threw a pebble at it, so I've been *stone* blind ever since, gentlemen. He was ten foot six long, (*Holds his pole high up.*) with a head of black lanky locks down to his very elbows.

FRANK. 'Tis the Demon! (*Apart to himself*)

HAM. I lifted up my hammer to strike it but I was so tremulous that I knock'd my own head instead.

FRANK. What did this strange object? (*To Hammerpan.*)

HAM. It didn't speak to me, nor I to it. I saw it at first in the forest picking acorns and berries – and then, after it had dispersed our tribe, like a ferret among the rats – it took a drink at our broth, and burnt its fingers in our fire.

FRANK. And what became of this creature?

HAM. I wasn't curious enough to inquire. My wife was in fits at the sight of the devil – so I was obliged to keep my one eye upon her.

FELIX. Your one eye has been pretty well employed. Come, come, gipsy, we'll cross the wood and see if this man mountain is to be met.

HAM. The good genius of wandering tinkers forbid!

FELIX. (*To Frankenstein.*) And now, my friend, we'll on to the cottage.

FRANK. So, so! (*Apart.*) I will follow ye!

(*Exeunt Felix and Hammerpan*)

So! the peasants have already been terrified by the ungainly form! Ambitious experimentalist! The consciousness of the crime I have committed eternally haunts me! I have indeed drawn a horrible curse on my head! He may be malignant, and delight [for its own sake] in murder and wretchedness! a whole country may execrate me as their pest! Every thought that bears towards my baneful project causes my lips to quiver and [my] heart to palpitate. [But, away with these wretched reflections –] I must now to the cottage of Felix. Agatha, fairest Agatha, [fairest Agatha,] instead of smiles, your lover will meet you with dark and hopeless despondency! (*Exit Frankenstein*)

SCENE V

Evening. – Interior of the cottage of De Lacey. – The thatched roof in sight. A woodfire. – Through an open rustic porch are visible a rivulet, and small wooden bridge – a wooden couch – Music. – De Lacey discovered seated thereon, with Agatha next him in attendance. The Demon appears through the portico, watching them, and regards Agatha with rapture. – Agatha kisses her father's hand, takes a small pail or hand bucket, and trips through the portico on to the bridge to procure water. The Demon having retreated on Agatha's approach, pursues her on the bridge. Agatha, turning suddenly perceives the Demon, screams loudly, and swoons, falling into the rivulet.

DEL. Gracious Heaven – that cry of horror! Agatha!

The Demon leaps from the bridge and rescues her.

DEL. Gracious Heaven – that cry of Horror! – Agatha! My sweet child, where art thou? – Agatha, Agatha!

Music – The Demon places Agatha, insensible, on a bench near De Lacey.

DEL. This silence – this suspense is dreadful!

The Demon tenderly guides the hand of De Lacey and places it on Agatha.

DEL. My child – cold, cold, and insensible! – this mystery – cruel fate – Dead? – no, no, no, her heart still beats. – Kind Heaven has saved me that pang! – Felix, Felix, where art thou? My dear daughter, for your poor father's sake revive!

Music. – Agatha recovers. – The Demon hangs over them, with fondness. Felix and Frankenstein suddenly enter.

FRANK. Misery! The Demon!

FELIX. What horrid monster is this? – Agatha, my father is in danger? *The Demon retreats.*

Music. – Felix discharges his gun and wounds the Demon, who writhes under the wound. – In desperation pulls a burning branch from the fire – rushes at them – beholds Frankenstein – in agony of feeling dashes through the portico. Safie Enters to Agatha. – Hurried Music.

FINALE

Tell us – tell us – what form was there?
(With anxious fear enquiring)
Saw you its Eye – the hideous glare
Terrific dread inspiring!

The Demon is seen climbing the outside of the Portico. He bursts through the thatch with burning brand.

The fiend of Sin
With ghastly grin!
Behold the Cottage firing!

The Demon hangs to the Rafters, setting light to the thatch and Rafters, with malignant joy – as parts of the building fall – groups of gypsies appear on the bridge, and through the burning apertures – who join in the Chorus.

FULL CHORUS OF GYPSIES

Beware! Beware!
The hideous glare,
The fiend of Sin
With ghastly grin –
Behold the cottage firing.

Felix forces his way through the flames with his father and Safie – Frankenstein rushes out with Agatha.

ACT III

SCENE I

The Garden of Elizabeth, at Belrive. – Morning. (Same as Act I, Scene II.)

Enter Clerval from terrace entrance.

CLER. What a delightful morning! It is an auspicious commencement of the day which is to make me happy in the possession of my love! Elizabeth yet sleeps, peaceful be her slumbers! [Love has awakened me – the freshness of the air, and the beauty of the scenery animate me to the height of cheerfulness –] Soft, she approaches.

Enter Elizabeth from the house.

Elizabeth, my love, why that look of anxiety?

ELIZ. Oh, Clerval! We have had strange occurrences since you quitted me yesternight, our house is full of guests, my brother has brought here the family of De Lacey of whom you have heard me so often speak –

CLER. The family of De Lacey, the relatives of Agatha.

ELIZ. By some extraordinary mystery, which's yet unexplained to me, the Cottage in which Frankenstein discovered his mistress and

her family was destroyed by fire; they arrived late last night and all appear overcome with fatigue and terror; some dreadful calamity hangs about my dear brother.

CLER. How astonishing is his conduct. Alas! my sweet Elizabeth, in the midst of all this misery I am selfish – I trust these singular occurrences will not postpone our marriage. Consider, our friends are invited, the church is prepared.

ELIZ. A few hours may explain all. See now (*Looks towards house.*) Frankenstein approaches – observe his agitated countenance and restless step; he has not slept since his return – he has armed himself with pistols and appears continually watching.

CLER. We will retire and avoid him for the present. This way, love. (*Exeunt*)

Music – Enter Frankenstein from house.

FRANK. How am I to avoid the powerful vengeance of the monster formed by my cursed ambition. I gave him energy and strength, to crush my own guilty head! My hours pass in dread, and soon the bolt may fall which will deprive me of existence! [The diabolical act I have committed in raising a being, recurs each moment and conscience stricken – I shudder to think --Agatha! Agatha! gladly would I sacrifice my own life to preserve yours –] Yet the Demon preserved the life of Agatha – he had some feeling of affection – [and] how were those feelings requited! – by detestation, scorn, and wounds! – his look of everlasting malice! He will watch with the wiliness of a serpent, that he may sting with its venom! There is no hope but in the destruction of the Demon. (*Takes out his pistol.*) I must not cease to guard and protect my friends. (*Going to the door.*) Agatha has arisen. (*Conceals pistol.*)

Enter Agatha, a locket round her neck, from the house.

AGA. Frankenstein, I behold you unhappy – fleeing to solitude – and I cannot help supposing that you might regret the renewal of our connexion. [Do you love another?

FRANK. Agatha! Can you forgive my cold neglect? At the sight of you, my long smothered passion bursts out anew – but I thought you lost – receive me once again with smiles and bring me back to life and hope.

AGA. These transports ill accord with the heavy gloom which pervades you –] Dear Frankenstein, I still love you, and confess that in my airy dreams of futurity you have been my constant friend and companion.

FRANK. [Blessed sounds –] Agatha, you shall be mine! I will then divulge to you the secret which disturbs – nay, distracts me.

Music, the Harmonica. – Distant church bells.

Those cheerful chimes announce the wedding day of Elizabeth and Clerval! [This way – Agatha –] My care-worn looks will but damp their merriment.

(Music. – Exeunt Frankenstein and Agatha) Enter Felix and Safie from house.

FELIX. Listen, Safie, to those merry village bells; they ring a rare contrast to our last night's misery. Soon, my eastern Rose, will they chime for us; and then away with care. This kiss – (*Embracing her.*)

SAFIE. Fie, Felix! In open daylight. You will deepen the blush of you Eastern rose.

DUET – SAFIE AND FELIX

Come with me, dear, to my mountain home,
And Hymen shall hallow the peaceful dome.
Leave all the world for love and for me,
And I will be all the world to thee.
Our life shall be all holiday –
Shall be all holiday.
Come o'er the dew-bespangled vale,
Where the violet blue and primrose pale
Peep from the verdant shade.
Come o'er the dew-bespangled vale,
Where the violet blue and primrose pale,
Where the violet blue and primrose pale
Peep from the verdant shade.
Come o'er the dew, &c., &c.
We'll fly to the shady grove,
And sign and whisper, love,

Till day begins to fade,
Till day begins, &c., &c.
We'll roam, and I will woo thee, love,
Where birds sing sweetly through the grove –
Where birds sing sweetly thro' the grove
Till day begins to fade.

We'll roam, and I will woo thee, love,
Where birds sing sweetly thro' the grove –
While birds sing, &c., &c., &c.

Music, with the bells. – Enter Madame Ninon, leading a group of Dancing Villagers, from the terrace entrance, and Elizabeth, with Clerval, re-enter.

NIN. Now, Madame Elizabeth – now, Mr. Clerval – we are all ready, and the priest is in waiting.

Music resumed. – Elizabeth and Clerval, as also Safie and Felix, join the procession, and all the villagers dance off to music along the terrace, except Madame Ninon.

NIN. There they go to be coupled, pretty dears! (*Calls.*) Fritz! Fritz! Where is my stupid husband? I've stretched my neck out of joint looking for him. I expect him from the market at Geneva with a cargo of eatables and my new-fashioned beehive cap – all for our wedding festival of Mr. Frankenstein, who has brought his bride and family here in consequence, as I am told, of their cottage being accidentally destroyed by fire last night. Oh! here the fellow comes, with a basket on his back, creeping like a snail.

Enter Fritz, from the terrace entrance, with hamper at his back containing various articles, a lady's cap, and a live duck.

FRITZ. Here I am, spousy. I've brought your list of articles.

Ninon assists him in putting down his basket.

There's the trout, and the sugar-loaf, and the melons, and the nutmegs.

NIN. But dear Fritz, where's my new beehive [cap] you were to bring from the milliner's at Geneva?

FRITZ. Somewhere, I know. (*Looking and examining the contents of the hamper, cautiously opening the top.*) The three live ducks are lying a top of the maccaroni, squeezed up under the large Gruyere cheese.

NIN. I hope to goodness my cap is not squeezed up!

FRITZ. It's quite safe, I tell you. I put it at the very bottom of the basket.

NIN. It will be in a nice state for my head, then!

FRITZ. lord, here's a rummaging fuss for the cap. I was so nervous about it – you cautioned me so, you know. (*Still kneeling and searching the hamper.*) Oh, dear, where is it now? Oh, la, to be sure, spousy – here it is at last; la, I knew it was safe. (*He pulls the cap out, with a live duck in it.*)

NIN. (*Takes her cap from him.*) Oh, Fritz, it's spoiled! That duck has been *laying* in it.

FRITZ. Not an egg, I hope, Ninon!

NIN. Alas! see how it is rumpled. (*She takes from the cap two or three of the duck's small feathers, which fall on the stage.*)

FRITZ. (*Aside.*) Ha! – he! he! Cap and feathers!

NIN. You careless, good-for-nothing dog!

FRITZ. (*Aside.*) Dog and Duck!

NIN. Take the basket in, you sinner! (*Having first replaced her cap in the hamper.*)

FRITZ. Oh! (*To the duck.*) You look very jolly, my fine fellow, considering you are going to be killed for dinner. Wait till the peas are ready! I never seen such a piece of *quackery* as that cap in all my life!

Draws the basket after him into the house, and comes forward during the duet.

NIN. My finery destroyed by that varlet! But even *that* shall not disconcert me. My sweet mistress is united to-day to the man of her heart, and in spite of my cap I will be merry, and dance till [I'm so old] I can dance no longer.

DUET- NINON AND FRITZ

(Welsh air.)

NIN. Oh! I'll hail the wedding day,
And be the gayest of the gay,
Till age has tripp'd my steps away.

FRITZ. (*Re-entering from house.*) Away!

NIN. Your manners were not taught in France.

FRITZ. La, wife! when you're too old to Dance –
A horse at sixty – (*Aside.*) – cannot prance –
Ah, nay!

NIN. While pipes and tabors playing sweetly,
With all my soul I'll foot it feately,

FRITZ. Yes, I guess you'll hobble neatly. Wife!

NIN. Don't wife me, you saucy fellow!
Sure you're tipsy –

FRITZ. Only mellow.
We'll all be so, for that is fun and life!

TOGETHER. Don't wife me, you saucy fellow.
I won't wife you, I'm only mellow.

NIN. I ne'er was tipsy.

FRITZ. You ne'er was tipsy, only mellow. Wife!

Fritz dances her up to the house, Ninon turns, boxes his ear, and they exeunt into house. Music. – The Demon appears from terrace entrance, watching about, and retreats as Fritz re-enters from house.

FRITZ. Oh! (Rubbing his cheek.) What's the use of a fine cap to her? she's so short, unless she stood upon a chair, in the crowd – no one would see her, or her new-fashioned bee-hive either.

During the above speech, William comes from the house, behind Fritz on tiptoe, and gives Fritz a smart smack on the back, who being fearfully alarmed, cries out lustily.

Oh, bless my soul! There now, that's just the way to make me nervous again. What do you want, Master William?

WILL. I can't get a soul to speak to me in the house – some are busy – some are going to be married – will you play with me, Fritz?

FRITZ. I like a game of play – it's so relaxing. When work was over I used to play with my cow.

WILL. (Throwing a ball.) Run and fetch that ball –

FRITZ. Lord, my dear, that's very fatiguing. – What a way you've thrown it – right among the cauliflowers.

Music – Goes off. Demon suddenly appears at the railing – watches the Child – Fritz returns.

FRITZ. Here it is, Master Willy! There's your ball, William Frankenstein.

WILL. Now again.

FRITZ. La – no – you give me more trouble than your brother used in his laboratory – when he –

William throws the ball behind the balustrade.

I won't fetch it – you may find it yourself –

Demon points to William – intimating that the boy must be dear to Frankenstein.

WILL. If you are too idle to go – I'm not –

FRITZ. I shan't look –

William goes to the balustrade. – The Demon suddenly seizes him.

WILL. Help! help! help!

FRITZ. Ah – that won't do – that won't do, young master – I'm not to be had –

WILL. Help! help!

Music. The Demon stops the boy's mouth – and throws him across his shoulder – Fritz turns – sees them – utters a cry of horror – the Demon rushes off.

FRITZ. Help! help! murder – wife! wife! the devil – oh my nerves!

(Runs off)
SCENE II

A Country View. Rustic Church in the distance. A large Yew Tree, spread plentifully with boughs. Music. – A Foreground with pathway behind it. The procession, as before, returning from the marriage ceremony. The corps de ballet, Villagers, preceding, dancing, followed by Felix, Safie, Clerval, and Elizabeth.

[CONGRATULATORY SESTETTO

[Agatha – Safie – Elizabeth – Felix – Clerval and Bass

[Since all to beauty's rip'ning bloom
[Their cheerful homage pay,
[Be not displeas'd that we presume
[To hail thy bridal day.

[But if, by Time's all conquering hand,
[Thy bloom must wear away,
[The roses of thy mind shall stand
[And never more decay.]

NIN. (*heard without.*) Oh, mistress! Oh!

FRITZ. I couldn't help it – murder!

Ninon and Fritz enter.

NIN. But where did you leave him?

FRITZ. He left me – Oh dear – (*Cries.*) Murder!

NIN. Oh wretched fate!

ELIZ. What is the matter, good Ninon?

NIN. William, your brother William is the matter; the boy is lost. I sent him to that Fritz, that he might be out of the way.

FRITZ. Yes; and now he's out of everybody's way.

ELIZ. This is most extraordinary – a frolic of the little rogue.

FRITZ. No, no, it isn't; I saw – my nerves! Oh, dear! I saw – a great something snatch him up. (*Cries.*) I – oh dear – oh dear. Oh! murder!

CLER. Here's Frankenstein.

Enter Frankenstein, with a pistol.

ELIZ. My dear Victor, know you aught of William? The child has been missed in a most unaccountable manner.

FRANK. My brother missing!

NIN. Fritz was with him.

FRITZ. Oh, master! a great creature – [wrapped in a mantle] oh! oh! oh! [(*Cries.*) murder!]

FRANK. [*Aside.*] No sooner has the idea crossed my imagination than I am convinced of its truth – the horrible Demon!]

CLER. Hasten, my friends, one and all – all search. Our pastime is marr'd till the boy is found.

Music. – All exeunt in consternation at different entrances, excepting Frankenstein, who appears lost in desponding reverie. – He turns; the boughs of the yew tree are pulled apart, and the Demon is discovered behind it, with William in his grasp. – Frankenstein draws a pistol, and points it – the Demon holds forth the child, when Frankenstein lowers his pistol, and kneels. – The Demon again shoulders the child, and rushes off within the path. – Frankenstein rises, and pursues them in despair.

SCENE III

An Apartment in the Villa Belrive. – A wide folding window opening to the Garden, closed. A table with red baize covering.

Enter Agatha and Ninon.

NIN. The most unaccountable disappearance of my dear little boy, at such a moment – on such a day – when we should have been so merry!

AGA. It is indeed strange and fearful; let us hope that William will soon be discovered, and brought home. (*Aside.*) The wild phantom that fired our cottage, surely, is not concerned.

NIN. I can do nothing but think of William – that is your room, ma'am – (*Pointing to the door.*) – you will find it well furnished – with such sweet blue eyes – everything is comfortable – unhappy little boy! There's a fire grate in the room – with two little dimples on each cheek! There's a cabinet in the corner – curly locks! Forgive me, ma'am; I fostered the pretty child, and I cannot get him out of my head.

AGA. Pray leave me, Ninon, and give me the earliest intelligence of Mr. Frankenstein's return.

NIN. All the festivities of the wedding-day destroyed, till this dear unlucky urchin is found. [Bless me the large looking glass, with the curtain undrawn – well, it may e'en remain so – for we cannot be gay till the truant comes back.] (*Sobbing.*) The sweet little, naughty, rosy-cheek'd rogue! how I will whip him when he comes home. (*Exit Ninon.*)

During the above the Demon is seen at the window watching, and disappears.

AGA. Frankenstein! what a singular fatality is attached to you – with wealth and friends, doomed to be miserable! – This mystery! – I feel a heavy foreboding of mischance! a presentiment of evil pervades my mind. I may regret the day that I have again met Frankenstein – I may rue the hour that I left our humble hut.

(Exit Agatha to Room) Afterwards, enter Frankenstein, reflecting – two pistols in his belt.

FRANK. One sudden and desolating change has taken place – the fangs of remorse tear my bosom and will not forgo their hold! – pursue the Demon! One might as well attempt to overtake the winds, or confine a mountain torrent. My poor Brother – I – I am thy murderer – the author of unalterable evils. [I live in momentary fear lest the monster I have created should still commit some signal crime which by its enormity will almost efface the recollection of the past.] There is scope for fear, so long as anything I love remains. (*Goes to door.*) Agatha! she reclines sleeping on yon sofa [– yesternight's fatigue.]

Music. – The Demon during the above soliloquy reappears on the balcony of the window – and while Frankenstein is looking in at the door, the Demon creeps in at the window, crouching beneath the table, unseen.

Sleep on, sweet innocence! I dare not leave you; I will stay and guard your slumber, or the remorseless Demon will snatch your breath away.

Music. – Frankenstein takes out a pistol and primes it – lays it on the table.

The wretch ev'n now may be haunting the room – let me search around.

[Searches – The Demon eludes him – Frankenstein goes to the curtain which covers the glass.

This Drapery which covers the glass may conceal the monster.

Frankenstein feels the drapery fearfully with the point of the sword – while Frankenstein is thus employed – Demon creeps along the floor into Agatha's room – Frankenstein draws the curtain – Agatha's door is reflected in the glass.]

Oh, Agatha! would that I had banished myself for ever from my native country, and wandered a friendless outcast over the earth, rather than I had again met you – perhaps to bring you in the grasp of my fiendish adversary – perhaps to – (*A piercing scream.*) – My blood curdles! that shriek! Ah! What do I behold!

In the large glass – Agatha appears on her knees with a veil over her head. – The Demon with his hand on her throat – she falls – the Demon disappears after tearing a locket from Agatha's neck.

My last, last hope! (*Rushes into room.*)

The figure of Frankenstein appears in the glass, kneeling over the body of Agatha. The Demon crosses by the window in a boat with great swiftness – exulting.

SCENE IV

An Ante-chamber in Belrive.

Enter Elizabeth, hastily, meeting Ninon. – Music ceases.

ELIZ. Whence is this fresh alarm?

NIN. I know not madam. Oh, wretched day for poor Ninon! Mr. Frankenstein is stark mad; he ran but out this instant, jumped into his boat, and rowed off rapidly.

Enter Fritz, alarmed.

FRITZ. Oh, oh, oh! – I've seen it – seen it again! The great monster, it got out of one of our windows and scuttled off in a boat, and there's Mr. Frankenstein got another boat, and is going after the great creature like lightning.

ELIZ. Where – where are our friends?

FRITZ. Mr. Clerval and Mr. Felix have followed Mr. Frankenstein.

SAFIE. (*Without.*) Help! ah, help!

Enter Safie hastily, throws herself into the arms of Elizabeth.

SAFIE. Ah Madam! Agatha, my sister – the gentle Agatha – I fear, is no more!

OMNES. Agatha!

ELIZ. Gracious Heaven! what horrible destiny hangs over us?

SAFIE. Stretched on the ground she lies! [a livid mark on her neck!] Ah! Elizabeth, the spark of life may yet not be extinct.

ELIZ. Haste – hasten to the room. (*Exeunt hastily*)

Hurried Music.

SCENE V

Wild Border of the Lake. At the extremity of the stage, a lofty over-hanging mountain of snow.

Music. – All the Gipsies discovered in various groups. A pistol shot is heard. The Gipsies start up alarmed. A second pistol is fired nearer. The Demon rushes on with the locket worn by Agatha, during the piece. The Gipsies scream out and fly in all directions. Hammerpan is on the point of escaping, when the Demon seizes him, and Hammerpan falls down on being dragged back. The Demon points off to intimate that Frankenstein is approaching, throws down the locket, commands the gipsy, Hammerpan, to show it to Frankenstein – the Demon threatens him, and rushing up the mountain, climbs, and disappears. Enter Frankenstein, with two loaded pistols and a musket unloaded. – At the same time Hammerpan rises and gets near first wing.

FRANK. In vain do I pursue the wretch, in vain have I fired on him. (*Throws his gun from him.*) He eludes the bullet. Say, fellow, have you seen aught pass here?

HAM. The giant creature, who aroused us in the forest, rushed upon me but this instant, and pointing to the path by which you came, intimated that I should give you this. (*Presents locket to Frankenstein.*)

FRANK. 'Tis Agatha's – the murdered Agatha! Malicious fiend! it will joy you to know that my lacerated heart bleeds afresh. Revenge shall henceforth be the devouring and only passion of my soul. I have but one resource – I devote myself either in my life or death to the destruction of the Demon. Agatha! William! you shall be avenged!

HAM. See yonder (*Points.*) the monster climbs the snow.

FRANK. Then this rencontre shall terminate his detested life or mine.

Music. – Frankenstein draws his pistol – rushes off at back of stage. – The gipsies return at various entrances. – At the same time, enter Felix and Clerval with pistols, and Safie, Elizabeth, and Ninon following. – The Demon appears at the base of the mountain, Frankenstein pursuing.

CLER. Behold our friend and his mysterious enemy.

FELIX. See – Frankenstein aims his musket at him – let us follow and assist him. (*Is going up stage with Clerval.*)

HAM. Hold master! if the gun is fired, it will bring down a mountain of snow [on their heads.] Many an avalanche has fallen there.

[**FELIX.** He fires –]

Music. – Frankenstein discharges his musket. – The Demon and Frankenstein meet at the very extremity of the stage. – Frankenstein fires – the avalanche falls and annihilates the Demon and Frankenstein. – A heavy fall of snow succeeds. – Loud thunder heard, and all the characters form a picture as the curtain falls.